UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
21st meeting
held on
19 November 1992
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Chairman:	Mr. KHOUINI	(Tunisia)
later:	Mr. FUENTES-IBAÑEV (Vice-Chairman)	(Bolivia)
later:	Mr. KHOUINI (Chairman)	(Tunisia)

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92-57881 6347S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/SPC/47/SR.21
25 November 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

PROGRAMME PLANNING (A/SPC/47/L.12)

1. The CHAIRMAN informed members of the Committee that a letter from the Chairman of the Special Political Committee to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee regarding agenda item 105, "Programme Planning", had been circulated in document A/SPC/47/L.12.

AGENDA ITEM 76: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (continued) (A/SPC/47/L.9 and L.10)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION (A/47/21)

(b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/47/462)

2. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a letter (A/SPC/47/4) from the Permanent Representative of Namibia transmitting the text of the Declaration of Windhoek on Promoting an Independent and Pluralistic African Press, which had been adopted at the United Nations/UNESCO seminar held in Windhoek, Namibia, from 29 April to 3 May, 1991.

3. Miss LOPEZ SOMOZA (Argentina) said that the principles of freedom of the press and freedom of information and communication had been an indissoluble part of Argentine society since the beginning of the country's political life and were reflected in the national Constitution. Argentina noted with satisfaction that those principles were reflected in the Committee's resolutions.

4. Great and decisive changes had lately affected the international community and were reflected in the work of the United Nations, as was witnessed by the fact that the Committee had begun to discuss preventive diplomacy, peace-building and peace-keeping on the basis of the Secretary-General's Agenda for peace (A/47/277). The Department of Public Information (DPI) was playing, as it should, an important role in that new situation, for there was more than ever a need to make the world aware of United Nations activities relating to international security and economic and social development.

5. The United Nations information centres were important to the future work of the Committee and the Department. The theme of information on peace-keeping operations was of great importance. In Argentina, as in many other countries whose forces took part in such operations, there was a great desire for up-to-date information on them. In Argentina's view there were two main aspects to the question. First, peace-keeping operations should include specialists in information management and the information should be channelled rapidly to Headquarters to be disseminated. Secondly, information on peace-keeping operations should be made available to the international

(Miss Lopez Somoza, Argentina)

community, in particular to countries contributing troops. Action should be taken urgently on both aspects by the Department, which had the ultimate responsibility in the matter.

6. Mr. Fuentes-Ibañez (Bolivia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

7. Ms. ARYSTANBEKOVA (Kazakhstan) said that, from a study of the Secretary-General's report (A/47/462) and the report of the Committee on Information (A/SPC/47/21), it was clear to her delegation that Member States and organizations in the United Nations system attached considerable importance to the role of information in international cooperation.

8. The reports presented an impressive picture of the Organization's information activities in support of international peace and security, human rights, economic and social development, environmental protection and the broad range of other areas in which the United Nations was active.

9. In his address to the General Assembly, the President of Kazakhstan had stressed the growing role of the United Nations in a post-cold war world and noted the need for a new level of coordination of the efforts of the entire world community in responding to the challenges of the future. The present circumstances of dramatic global change had once again highlighted the role of information in helping the world realize the lofty goals of the United Nations Charter and make the United Nations an agent for effective cooperation in the name of peace and progress.

10. In that context, the signing of an agreement by Kazakhstan's President and the Secretary-General on the establishment of a United Nations Interim Office in Alma Ata was a highly symbolic event. One of the main tasks of the office would be the dissemination of information regarding the activities of the Organization and the efforts of the international community in ensuring political stability, preserving the global environment and nurturing stable economic and social development.

11. The joint United Nations/UNESCO seminar on the development of independent and pluralistic mass media in Asia held in Alma Ata had addressed a number of professional, economic, social and legal questions, as well as factors promoting the development of independent media. Participants had endorsed a declaration in which they announced their full support for the basic principles of the Windhoek Declaration and reaffirmed their adherence to those principles in the struggle for free, independent and pluralistic media in all regions of the world, and had also worked out a package of draft proposals for the stable development of independent and pluralistic mass media. Kazakhstan, as a newly independent State, attached particular importance to the Declaration's provisions concerning assistance programmes for the training of specialists and the enhancement of the technical capabilities of information agencies throughout central Asia.

(Ms. Arystanbekova, Kazakhstan)

12. As a State which had embarked upon a course of radical democratic and economic change, Kazakhstan recognized the pre-eminent importance of the individual freedoms reaffirmed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other generally recognized norms of international law. In order to guarantee those freedoms, the draft constitution of Kazakhstan contained two articles recognizing freedom of speech, freedom of belief, the free expression of beliefs and the right to receive and disseminate information by all legal means.

13. Kazakhstan was reaffirming its commitment to the goals and principles of the United Nations Charter by striving to make a constructive contribution in all areas of the Organization's activities, including the area of information. To that end, her Government was prepared to cooperate on a broad basis with other member States, specialized agencies within the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations.

14. Mr. VALDEZ (Cuba) said that the significance of the growing consensus within the Committee on Information on the draft resolutions it adopted should not be overestimated. The item under consideration encompassed not only the information activities of the United Nations but also global information patterns and trends, and there the gap between the informational capabilities of the developed and the third world countries had, if anything, widened. The United Nations was far from achieving the goals it had set when it had envisaged the new world information and communication order.

15. The underdeveloped countries could do little to preserve their values, culture and chosen systems when the only option available to them was to engage in an unequal struggle with the great information monopolies of the developed countries, which had virtually inexhaustible resources with which to sell the viewpoints of their own societies.

16. At a time of supposed new promise for lasting peace and mutually beneficial international cooperation, actions were being taken that not only violated basic principles of international law but also ran counter to the Organization's information goals. The most obvious example was the aggressive and subversive television and radio broadcasting beamed at Cuba by the United States of America, which violated the International Telecommunication Convention and had provoked reprimands by the International Frequency Registration Board. The Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries at their latest Summit Conference had asked the United States to cease such hostile radio and television transmission since it was contrary to international law and to good neighbourliness, and the Secretary-General had at the same meeting warned that decolonization and the disappearance of power blocs had not eliminated the temptation of world or regional domination.

17. The transnational information agencies more often than not used their information monopoly to stifle any attempts by the third world to make its

(Mr. Valdez, Cuba)

voice heard, for they relied on the one-way flow of information, under the guise of freedom of expression, to impose their alien perception of the world.

18. Cuba reiterated its concern that attempts might be made, through the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for 1992-1997, to use United Nations public information or data-gathering activities or the activities of the United Nations information centres abroad to violate the principles of State sovereignty and of non-interference in internal affairs. Cuba itself would continue working with and within the United Nations to achieve the objectives of the new international information and communication order.

19. Mr. BHAGAT (India) said that free media were a catalyst for human freedom, endeavour and development, both on a national and a global scale. His own country was proud of its unrestricted, pluralistic and active press, which was a pillar of its democratic system and a vehicle for economic progress. India welcomed the recent seminars DPI had been holding on the promotion of independent and pluralistic media, and would be happy to share its experience in the matter with the Department.

20. The welcome and growing consensus in the Committee on Information had led to a commitment to enhancing the free flow of information and reducing the disparities between developed and developing countries while improving the latter's capability to disseminate information. To remedy the serious global imbalance that existed in the field of information, advanced technological communication infrastructures had to be established in the developing countries, so that they could put across their views, achievements and aspirations in the international media. In itself, that would be a very desirable global manifestation of pluralism. Support should therefore be given to programmes such as the UNESCO-administered International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), along with direct assistance to the developing world in the field of information.

21. One of the more contentious issues addressed by the Committee on Information had been the role of the United Nations information centres. While noting with interest the Secretary-General's proposal to integrate the centres at a number of stations with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) field offices, as part of a laudable effort to streamline operations and promote cost-effective management, India believed that care should be taken to ensure that such merging did not affect the functional autonomy of the information components in their specialized tasks, and there should be an assessment of the effectiveness of such interim joint offices as well as of the 21 centres currently headed by UNDP representatives.

22. The renewed reliance on the United Nations by its Member States had placed new demands on DPI to promote an informed understanding of the purposes of the Organization. The Department had begun to respond to the urgent challenges before it and should continue trying to make optimal use of its limited

(Mr. Bhagat, India)

resources. An increasingly important part of its extensive activities had come to be the dissemination of information on peace-keeping operations. It had played a notable role in several multi-dimensional and integrated peace-keeping operations, like those in El Salvador and Cambodia, by launching major educational and information campaigns that had been substantive aspects of the United Nations functioning in those countries. DPI had also run excellent public information campaigns for major United Nations events such as the Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, which had resulted in increased awareness of the vital issues involved.

23. DPI had, in addition, very effectively maintained liaison with the world media at Headquarters through press briefings and releases, an aspect of its work that should not be underestimated. The Department's recent publication of the World Media Handbook and its efforts to reduce the backlog in its other reference publications were encouraging. Its radio broadcasts in various languages and its videos and films were a valuable source of information. Moreover, the public opinion surveys its conducted in various Member States, allowing the United Nations to target its output and evaluate its usefulness, were an important component of the Organization's information strategy. Another good means of generating grass-roots support for the United Nations was the active collaboration of DPI with selected non-governmental organizations. In all its work, the Department must hold to high standards of balance, objectivity and tolerance for the diverse values that made up the universal ethos. Freedom implied freedom for all to inform and be informed, and that should remain the aim.

24. Mr. ALSAIDI (Yemen) said that it was incumbent upon the developed world to redress the imbalance between it and the developing countries by helping them overcome their structural and institutional deficiencies. The right to a free flow of information was a fundamental right of every citizen. Thus, a vibrant free press had mushroomed across Yemen since reunification.

25. His delegation viewed with admiration the cooperation between DPI and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in connection with the joint United Nations/UNESCO seminar held in Alma Ata (A/SPC/47/3). A similar meeting should be held to encourage a free and pluralistic press in the Middle East, and Yemen would be more than happy to assist in that regard.

26. The establishment of United Nations interim offices with information components in the States of the Commonwealth of Independent States was to be of vital importance. He wished to stress, however, the supremacy of General Assembly resolutions and the recommendations of the Committee on Information over administrative decisions.

27. Yemen welcomed the initiation of the process to establish the United Nations Information Centre in Sana'a, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/73 B; it would extend all possible assistance to the Secretariat

(Mr. Alsaidi, Yemen)

in that connection, and expected in return the full and unambiguous implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Information and General Assembly resolution 46/73 B, including the appointment of an experienced director for the centre, who would be expected to work in harmony with the UNDP Resident Representative in Sana'a.

28. His delegation commended the education campaign undertaken by DPI on the question of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East, as well as the situation in South Africa. The Department should not cease to educate world public opinion as to the oppression and suffering inflicted on the peoples of Palestine and South Africa until they obtained their right to self-determination.

29. Mr. POPESCU (Romania) said that, after moving rapidly and irreversibly to a totally free exchange of views both in the streets and in the mass media two years previously, Romania had fostered independent, pluralistic media. It had enacted legislation to encourage fair competition, diversity and entrepreneurship in the field of information, and to guarantee free expression and a free flow of information, while outlawing censorship. More than 12,000 daily newspapers and periodicals were printed in Romania, in the languages of ethnic minorities as well, and most were privately owned. Radio and television stations had also multiplied, many of them private. Further steps were being considered for a better integration of Romanian media with the main international information networks.

30. His delegation commended the high professionalism with which DPI was meeting the dramatically increased demands for better coverage of United Nations activities. Its materials were the main source of an understanding of the United Nations presence in the world, and were received with great interest by the public. The streamlining of the Department should not result in any reduction of its functions. DPI could, in fact, expand its contributions in certain areas, such as developing communication infrastructures in countries requesting such assistance, training specialized personnel, and organizing seminars and workshops for a broader spectrum of journalists. The UNESCO-administered IPDC was also making a contribution to the freedom, independence and pluralism of the press, as had the relevant Windhoek and Alma Ata Declarations. Non-governmental organizations and public or private foundations were more interested in assisting regional initiatives, as they should be.

31. Romania appreciated the spirit of compromise that had again prevailed in the Committee on Information and supported the proposed enlargement of its membership. A hotly debated issue had been the functioning of the United Nations information centres. The Secretary-General had put forward an interesting proposal to integrate them with other United Nations offices, and the 10-year experience with the information centre in Bucharest, which was coordinated by the UNDP representative, indicated that the option was viable. That Centre was doing well in disseminating information on United Nations

(Mr. Popescu, Romania)

activities, and it received regular financial and other support from his Government. The Centre's responsibilities were constantly expanding, but a problem had arisen with other United Nations agencies that requested its services but were unwilling to help pay for them.

32. Romania urged the adoption by consensus of the draft resolutions and draft decision before the Committee.

33. Mr. MAUNG (Myanmar) commended the extensive and comprehensive efforts of DPI in providing timely information for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The actual news coverage of the Conference itself also deserved special commendation. Moreover, DPI deserved to be congratulated for having updated the Yearbook of the United Nations for the first time in decades. However, the decision not to continue publication of Development Forum beyond 1992 was most regrettable; his delegation would join with other like-minded Member States in urging the Department to continue publication of Development Forum while the search for a solution to the financial difficulties of the publication was under way.

34. Human resources development in the information area was essential to help developing countries acquire technical expertise. Consideration should therefore be given to the possibility of expanding the programme, as the broadcasters and journalists who had participated in the 1991 programme had expressed great appreciation for it.

35. The United Nations information centres played an essential role in promoting awareness and understanding of the work and purposes of the Organization among the peoples of the world. While Myanmar did not object in principle to the idea of integrating them with UNDP offices, that was a matter which required careful study, taking due account of the decisions and priorities identified by Member States. Cooperation between Myanmar and the United Nations information centre in Yangon had increased significantly during 1992.

36. The new challenges facing the world community as a result of the end of the cold war and the growing interdependence of nations were highlighting the importance of information and communication. At the same time, however, the present world information order remained singularly deficient. Because of disparities in technology and resources, the flow of information remained one-sided. The developed countries, while accounting for less than 15 per cent of the world's population, nevertheless enjoyed a virtual monopoly on the gathering and dissemination of information that placed the developing nations at a distinct disadvantage. Moreover, due to the unidirectional flow of information, the world had not been able fully to enjoy the richness of the cultures, traditions and experiences of developing countries. In an age when timely and accurate information was necessary to make the right decisions, positive developments in the developing countries remained largely unnoticed, while unpleasant news from there received immediate attention. Some media

(Mr. Maung, Myanmar)

reports emanating from developed countries were of a biased or prejudiced nature, as their interpretations of events were based largely on the values and attitudes of the developed world without regard for the realities of the situation. Regrettably, world opinion about developing countries was sometimes shaped by reports which were sometimes at variance with the truth.

37. Although freedom of information was a universally accepted principle, there were many instances when it had been misused in order to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries through, for example, the provision of media facilities to groups engaged in anti-State activities against sovereign nations. Such actions were contrary to the principles of the 1981 United Nations Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty.

38. Efforts to build a new international order should be accompanied by equally active efforts to construct a new international information and communication order, based on the observance of the principles of the United Nations Charter as well as respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and social and cultural values of all States. The new order must also aim at reducing the disparity between the developed and developing countries with respect to information, while at the same time promoting international understanding and cooperation.

39. Myanmar was in the process of transforming its political and economic systems to create a multi-party democratic State with a market-oriented economy. A similar change was also occurring in the administrative and social fields, including the field of information. Relying mainly on its own resources, his Government had taken steps to improve and expand its existing information and communications network, using satellite technology. The activities of the United Nations in combating drug abuse, protecting the environment and improving public health were frequent topics. With respect to print media, the number of newspapers had more than doubled and the number and range of private publications had dramatically expanded. In addition, public libraries were being established throughout the country, even in remote rural areas, in order to encourage reading.

40. Mr. ZHANG WANHAI (China) said that in addition to disseminating to the whole world information about the work of the United Nations, DPI should also promote information exchange between the United Nations and its Member States, as well as among Member States themselves.

41. To narrow the information gap between developed and developing countries, it was essential to strengthen the information and communication infrastructure in developing countries and promote the establishment of a more equitable and effective new world information and communication order which respected the sovereignty of all States, as well as the cultural traditions and social values of people in different countries.

(Mr. Zhang Wanhai, China)

42. His delegation noted with satisfaction that DPI had made diligent efforts to carry out priority programmes approved by the General Assembly, and had done a great deal to disseminate information about United Nations activities for the maintenance of world peace and security and the promotion of economic and social progress. In particular, his delegation welcomed the considerable progress made in the publication of the Yearbook of the United Nations. The Department should continue its efforts and make, in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions, new appraisals of its priorities and distribution of financial resources so as to be more cost-effective and achieve better results. At the same time, he also wished to stress that in filling its vacancies, DPI should apply more comprehensively the principle of equal regional distribution and give more consideration to candidates from under-represented regions and developing countries.

43. The Chinese Government, which attached great importance to the deliberations on questions relating to information, had endeavoured to enhance the cause of information and its dissemination in China. It was willing to strengthen its cooperation with the United Nations and other countries through multilateral and bilateral channels, and would continue its efforts to widen public knowledge within China of the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and to deepen understanding, among the people of the world, of China's programme of reform and opening up to the outside world.

44. Mr. KARAMOY (Indonesia) said that the new spirit of mutual conciliation had renewed hopes for a more equitable order for all mankind. The post-cold-war period had yielded consensus on a number of issues and the opportunity to find solutions to long-standing disputes. Information and communication were indispensable to the promotion of better understanding among all countries, but there was a need to change the dependent status of developing countries in that field. The Committee should help those Member States develop effective communication infrastructures.

45. The consensus reached on draft resolutions A and B (A/SPC/47/L.9 and L.10) provided a unique opportunity for the Organization to emphasize the critical importance of equitable participation of all Member States in the emerging new world information and communication order. It should take advantage of the improved international political climate and seek to remove the inequalities inherent in the information and communication system. He drew attention to the relevant paragraphs adopted by the Tenth Summit Meeting of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Jakarta in September 1992, regarding the need to establish the new order.

46. The non-aligned countries had undertaken programmes based on collective self-reliance to overcome impediments to their wider interaction in information and communication. They had assiduously sought ways to strengthen cooperative measures between UNESCO, UNDP, IPDC, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and DPI, on the one hand, and the Non-Aligned News Agencies Pool, as well their own broadcasting organizations, on the other.

(Mr. Karamoy, Indonesia)

47. Indonesia had long recognized the crucial role of information and communication in its social and economic progress and that of all third world countries, and had endeavoured to enhance cooperation on a multilateral, regional and bilateral basis. It had also carried out communication and information training programmes for media personnel from the Asian Pacific and African regions through the organization Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

48. His delegation appreciated the Department's activities and was gratified by its endeavours to disseminate objective information on apartheid, the Palestine question and important economic and social issues. Despite its financial constraints, the Department had, through the network of United Nations information centres, played an important role in responding to and understanding local needs and interests. His delegation was fully satisfied with the work of the Jakarta Centre and would like to underscore the importance of the annual training courses conducted by the Department for broadcasters and journalists from developing nations; it also hoped that the cooperation between the Department and non-aligned news agencies would be further strengthened.

49. Mr. SEDLAK (Czechoslovakia) said that freedom of the press and freedom of speech had become a guarantee of democracy and of a secure world. The confrontational character of discussions in the Committee on Information had been replaced, he hoped forever, by fruitful international cooperation. His delegation was convinced that the consensus would be maintained in the Special Political Committee and in the General Assembly.

50. The Windhoek seminar on the development of an independent and pluralistic press in Africa had been successful and inspiring; his delegation also welcomed the declaration issued by the United Nations/UNESCO seminar in Alma Ata in October 1992 and fully supported the proclamation of 3 May as Press Freedom Day. Czechoslovakia supported all international programmes and projects aimed at strengthening the communications infrastructures of the developing countries. However, the developing world needed neither monstrous projects nor bureaucratic approaches, but rather purposeful and coordinated activity.

51. Czechoslovakia welcomed the integration of appropriate United Nations information centres with UNDP offices while maintaining their functional autonomy. They should also serve as information-gathering centres, thus becoming an important part of the system of preventive diplomacy.

52. A free and independent press, radio and television had in the past months pressed for a just solution of regional conflicts. Hundreds and thousands of journalists had risked their lives in crisis areas and tens and hundreds of them had died fulfilling their professional duties. Therefore, the international community should intervene in the interest of journalists' security so as to protect their health and lives. Only a coordinated international effort could provide journalists with the necessary safeguards.

(Mr. Sedlak, Czechoslovakia)

53. Few things were so important to democracy as guaranteed and realized freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Czechoslovakia had opened itself to the world and no longer imposed any legislative restrictions that could in any way hinder free and diversified information contacts with foreign countries. Pertinent legislation respected all standards usual in democratic countries and created the preconditions for a gradual accession by Czechoslovakia to international conventions and agreements in the field of information, communication and free information exchange. He reiterated that after the cessation of the current Czechoslovak Federation on 1 January 1993, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic would take over all obligations and commitments arising from existing agreements.

54. Free, independent and pluralistic information could guarantee the existence of the democratic order within a given State; a free international exchange of information thus created the preconditions for the existence of normal, correct and civilized relations between partners in the international community. Information was an attribute of a secure world and a carrier of international solidarity; a more secure and trustworthy world could not be an uninformed one.

55. Mr. SALAS (Mexico) said that, because of the central role played by the United Nations in the profound transformations that were taking place in the world, the work of DPI had taken on a political significance which it had never had before. To that situation must be added the fact that the outlook for freedom of press and information had improved in several different regions of the world. His delegation therefore held the view that at its next session, the Committee on Information should take further steps in the conceptual development of the ideas set forth in its draft resolution A, (A/SPC/47/L.9), which he hoped would be adopted by consensus.

56. The Special Political Committee should give priority to the consideration of those activities of DPI which had been affected by the changes on the international political scene. Thus, the information centres had a new role to play, both in political and in practical terms. They should avoid any activity that might imply interference in questions which fell strictly within the internal competence of States. The possibility of integrating some information centres with other United Nations offices should take into account not only the administrative changes involved but also the conceptual aspect. In order to maintain the functional independence and the operational character of the centres, they must be viewed as the new voices of an organization that was undergoing a process of evolution. That was a difficult task, and the Committee on Information must approach it with great care.

57. The increase in the number and complexity of peace-keeping operations was a reflection of the changes taking place in the United Nations. His delegation wished to express its appreciation of the work done by the spokespersons for the peace-keeping operations, who should be provided with adequate support in the field. Information from the operational centres was

(Mr. Salas, Mexico)

fundamental in order to make it possible to anticipate problems, correct mistakes and avoid future difficulties.

58. His delegation also appreciated the work done by the correspondents assigned to United Nations Headquarters, who should be provided with the necessary facilities to enable them to perform their increasingly demanding tasks. Their voices must be heard within DPI.

59. Ms. ESTEFAN (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the United States and other open societies welcomed free expression of views by radio or any other means. Recalling that article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stressed the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, she said that in support of peoples' right to know, the Voice of America (VOA) had been broadcasting for decades, and has become a respected source of information in societies where that right had been denied. The United States extended to other international radio voices the right to broadcast within allotted frequencies. Her Government did no jamming and made no other effort to silence those voices, even when they were critical or spread disinformation. Her delegation believed that no Government should censor or control the freedom of expression.

60. Mr. VALDES (Cuba), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his Government had on many occasions expressed its willingness to establish an equitable and unconditional bilateral exchange of information with the United States. What his delegation objected to, as it had on previous occasions, was the fact that the United States Government had taken upon itself the right to transmit unilaterally to his country television and radio programmes that were subversive in content and were directed exclusively to a pre-selected audience, whose access to information would be determined by the United States.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.